

## **House Republicans and Their Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad First Week of Congress**

**With the 115th Congress beginning this week and the President-Elect's inauguration taking place in two weeks, Republicans have a responsibility to govern and get things done for the American people.**

**"It's put-up or shut-up time for Republicans...**Republicans who have shied from the responsibility of government will now be called upon to support increases in the debt limit, approve annual budgets, endorse spending bills and back other must-pass measures that they formerly left to the Democrats and some of their more compromising colleagues." [NY Times, [1/2/17](#)]

**But just days into the new Congress, Republicans are off to a rocky start. Instead of working with Democrats on bipartisan priorities, they began the week facing immense public outcry after attempting to gut the independent ethics office and they continue to struggle with deep divisions over their efforts to Make America Sick Again. Here's a look at how the new Congress is playing out so far:**

*Reversing Course on Gutting the Office of Congressional Ethics:*

[Washington Post: A day of chaos at the Capitol as House Republicans back down on ethics changes](#)

**"A day of pageantry to open the 115th Congress and usher in a new period of Republican governance was overtaken Tuesday by an **embarrassing reversal** on ethics oversight, with the **GOP gripped by internal division**."**

[New York Times: House Republicans, Under Fire, Back Down on Gutting Ethics Office](#)

**"It was supposed to be a triumphant morning for Republicans on Capitol Hill...By noon, party leaders had a message for their charges: **It was not going smoothly**."**

**"**'It was a stumble,**' said Representative Mark Sanford, Republican of South Carolina...**'Probably not the way you want to start out.'**"**

[Politico: House GOP reverses course on gutting ethics panel](#)

**"Following a public outcry... House Republicans reversed course Tuesday on a proposal to gut their own ethics watchdog."**

**"**'We shot ourselves in the foot,**' said Rep. Mike Simpson (R-Idaho), who said the ethics snafu was an unnecessary self-inflicted wound. **'Sometimes people have to learn the hard way.'**"**

[The Hill: House GOP scraps plan to gut ethics watchdog after emergency meeting](#)

**"The 115th session hadn't even formally gaveled in before House GOP leaders held an emergency conference meeting to discuss blowback against the party's vote to gut the chamber's independent ethics watchdog... [A] barrage of negative headlines and public outcry made it difficult for Republicans to stand by the measure..."**

[NPR: After Backlash, Including From Trump, House GOP Drops Weakening Of Ethics Office](#)

**"After a storm of criticism... House Republicans have reversed themselves and restored the current rules of the Office of Congressional Ethics."**

**"Public outcry, opposition from ethics watchdog groups, a divided GOP, and two tweets from Trump critical of the rules change prompted a swift reversal of the proposal..."**

*Office of the Democratic Whip Steny H. Hoyer, 1/6/17*

[USA Today: House Republicans drop plan to gut ethics office](#)

**“After public denunciations from watchdogs and criticism from President-elect Donald Trump, House Republicans on Tuesday reversed course and dropped plans to gut an independent agency that polices potential ethical wrongdoing by lawmakers.”**

**“The controversy over GOP plans to sharply curtail the powers of the Office of Congressional Ethics overshadowed the opening day of Congress...”**

**“‘House Republicans made the right move in eliminating this amendment that should never have seen the light of day,’ said David Donnelly, president and CEO of Every Voice watchdog group, on Tuesday. ‘Not one voter went to the polls in November hoping Congress would gut ethics oversight.’”**

[Deep Divisions Over Their Efforts to Repeal the Affordable Care Act and Make America Sick Again](#)

[New York Times: Turmoil Overshadows First Day of Republican-Controlled Congress](#)

**“Budget language released on Tuesday gives House and Senate committees only until Jan. 27 to produce legislation that would eliminate major parts of the health care law.”**

**“The document does not specify which provisions of the law may be eliminated and which ones may be preserved. Nor does it specify or even suggest how Republicans would replace the Affordable Care Act, which the Obama administration says has provided coverage to some 20 million people who were previously uninsured.”**

[Washington Post: Why Obamacare is unlikely to die a swift death](#)

**“Congressional Republicans have long boasted that once they claim the reins of power, they will act quickly and decisively to roll back what they view as the most onerous piece of President Obama’s domestic agenda: the Affordable Care Act.**

**“... [W]hile Republicans are determined to rapidly repeal as much of Obamacare as they can, they have not settled on a replacement plan or on when that plan should take effect.”**

**“The rush to immediately chip away at Obama’s regulatory and domestic policies through the complex process known as budget reconciliation could create months of messy GOP infighting.”**

[Politico: GOP airs Obamacare divisions in Pence meeting](#)

**“Republicans are fast-tracking the process of repealing Obamacare, aiming to get it done in several weeks. But they’re not even close to agreement about what comes next — or even when the repeal should take effect.”**

**“Those disagreements spilled over Wednesday at a closed-door meeting with Vice President-elect Mike Pence that had been intended to unify the Senate GOP...After nearly eight years of fighting Obamacare, Republican leaders and the incoming Trump administration are still trying to sort out the basics...”**

[The Hill: Ryan: ObamaCare replacement coming this year](#)

**“Ryan’s commitment that the replacement will occur this year means Republicans will have to put in the hard work of ironing out the details of a bill and dealing with competing interest groups and winners and losers.”**

**“Republicans currently do not have a consensus on a detailed replacement plan, which requires hard tradeoffs to put together.”**